

Community Blue Boxes Discontinued

You have no doubt noticed that all blue boxes located next to community mailboxes have been removed. The decision was driven in part by provincial legislation that places the cost of recycling upon manufacturers and by taking this step the city avoids \$1.8M in additional costs.

If you want to stop receiving unwanted flyers I encourage you to sign-up for Canada Post's Consumers' Choice program. More information is available here: canadapost.ca/ConsumersChoice

Development Update: 7079 Yonge Street

I held a Community Information Meeting November 3 on Arkfield's slightly revised application that maintains the proposed height at 45-storeys, reduces the podium to two storeys for that portion abutting the Vanguard, shifts the tower slightly east away from Yonge Street, and reduces the number of units by six to 562.

A final report from the city's Planning staff is expected in early 2026.

Ward 1 2025 Capital Projects

Markham is a well-managed city with great staff and services. In addition to providing efficient day-to-day operations, I think it is important for residents and local businesses to know that in 2025 the city **invested \$10.1M in Thornhill** through a host of capital project improvements.

Here's the Top 10:

#	Project Name	Amount	#	Project Name	Amount
1	CI Watermain CIPP Lining - Construction: Green Lane, Guardsman Road, Guardsman Road Easement/Felix Opatowski Park, Harlech Court and Sprucewood Drive	\$5,682,160	6	Waterplay Replacement: Simonston Park	\$488,400
2	Asphalt Road Resurfacing: John Street - Bayview Avenue to Bayview Fairways Drive, Aileen Road, Waggoners Wells Lane, Thornheights Road, Snowshoe Crescent, Eveningside Road, Roman Road, Flowervale Road, Fairway Heights Drive and Fairway Heights Crescent	\$1,268,207	7	Thornhill Community Centre: Pool Dectron (indoor pool dehumidification system) hallway and kitchen floor replacement, and Senior Centre kitchen refurbishment	\$240,300
3	Curb Box Inspection and Replacement Program (the valves used to turn on/off the water supply on private property) between Yonge Street and Leslie Street, and Highway 7 to Green Lane	\$747,900	8	Design of New Traffic Signals and Pedestrian Crossovers (PXOs): John Street and John Street "service road", John Street and Aileen Road, and John Street and Bayview Fairways Drive	\$127,200
4	Cast Iron Watermain Replacement - Design: Phase 8A (Proctor Avenue, Sprucewood Drive, Thornlea Court, Elm Ridge Acres area); Phase 8B (Kirk Drive, Paul Street, Marie Court, Sumner Lane and Charles Lane)	\$723,300	9	Ice Resurfacing Machine Replacement (i.e. a new Zamboni): Thornhill Community Centre.	\$110,800
5	Storm Culverts Rehabilitation: SC #07 (Clark Avenue / Henderson Avenue) and SC #13 (Yonge Street / John Street)	\$600,000	10	Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Playground Refurbishments - Year 3 of 4: Summerdale Park	\$75,000



Contact Centre

If you have an issue regarding municipal services, programs and general inquiries (snow removal, by-law complaints, garbage pick-up, graffiti, illegal dumping, property standards, park maintenance) please contact the city at **905-477-5530** or customerservice@markham.ca.



@KeithIrish1 Keeping you Informed & Connected: MarkhamWard1.ca

This website, markhamward1.ca, brings Ward 1 Thornhill residents a wealth of local information and news. Visit often and keep up-to-date!

Check out "Keith's Notebook" on markhamward1.ca (which includes a story on coyotes) and "Ward 1 Talk" on YouTube for even more information on topics of interest to Ward 1 Thornhill residents.



FALL 2025 / WINTER 2026

WARD 1 NEWS



UPDATE FROM KEITH IRISH, YOUR MARKHAM WARD 1 COUNCILLOR

Dear Residents,

A few months ago, I had an opportunity to meet Gregg Lintern, the City of Toronto's Chief Planner for six years until his retirement in late 2023 after a 40-year urban planning career.

We began talking about the current state of the development market and our predictions for the future. I believe in the cyclical nature of markets and that there will inevitably be periods of expansion and contraction in economic activity. Nowhere is that more obvious than in the present construction market for new homes, townhouses and condominiums where things are at a relative standstill across Markham and the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area.

Gregg, to my surprise, is not nearly as optimistic about an upturn at least to the level it was previously, nor its robustness.

Someone with his depth of experience is well-sought after by homebuilders.

He meets with them regularly and they characterize current market conditions as an "ice age", the likes of which we have not seen before. He also believes that once we turn the corner and conditions - especially interest rates - become more favourable, things will still never be the same as they once were.

Housing is one of the most interest-rate-sensitive sectors; purchasers lever up using borrowed money to make purchases, and back-off when borrowing is expensive. That dampens sales and construction. For instance, developers must first pre-sell 70 per cent of the units in a proposed building to qualify for construction financing. Not enough pre-sales mean no shovels in the ground.

While there are innumerable factors that got us here, an abundance of small 600 square foot or less condominiums are sitting empty. The current surplus of finished condominiums across the GTHA is estimated to take three or more years

to clear, provided of course there are buyers.

Many were built and purchased as investment opportunities. However, the largest market of purchasers - young people beginning careers and families and with the dream of home ownership - want more...if they can afford it. When the time comes developers will need to change; they will need to construct more of what people want and need. The age of tiny condominiums in too tall buildings in Gregg's opinion has passed.

I wish you, your family, and friends a safe and enjoyable winter season.

If you have an issue of concern, please contact me at: kirish@markham.ca, 905-948-5101 or my Executive Assistant Lauren Patton at lpattton@markham.ca, 905-415-7512.

Metrolinx Awards YNSE Tunnelling Contract

On August 6 the Ontario government and Metrolinx announced, following a competitive procurement process, that **North End Connectors** - a consortium of three companies (Aecon, FCC Construcción and Ghella) - has been awarded the \$1.4B contract to design and construct approximately 6.3 kilometres of tunnels for the Yonge North Subway Extension.

The contract also includes launch and extraction shafts for two tunnel boring machines (which will begin in the Langstaff Gateway and proceed south to Finch station) as well as early works construction of support headwalls for future stations and emergency exit buildings.

Tunnelling is expected to begin in the first half of 2027.

TD Canada Trust Branch Closure

I have learned that TD Canada Trust has decided to close their branch (#316) at 7967 Yonge Street just south of Royal Orchard Blvd.

You may recall the building sustained significant property damage due to a fire on December 23, 2024, and was closed for repairs. While the initial plan was to reopen in June, TD has since received a Notice of Application for Approval to Expropriate Land (NOA) from Metrolinx and at time of writing is in negotiations.

The bank tells me customers can continue to access their safety deposit

boxes at this location by calling 905-881-3252 to schedule an appointment and continue with their daily banking at nearby branches: TD Branch #531 at 100 Steeles Avenue West and TD Branch #1215 located at 9200 Bathurst Street.

TD will inform its customers directly when accounts and safety deposit boxes are planned to be transitioned to another branch location, hopefully in Thornhill.

Yonge Corridor Secondary Plan

Work on the plan continues with more opportunities for public engagement still planned. In the meantime, residents can continue to provide input through "Your Voice Markham" at:

yourvoicemarkham.ca/yongecorridor.

This newsletter is distributed using Canada Post walks; a small number of Ward 8 residents may also receive this.

Bayview John Visioning Exercise

The city is working on developing a vision for the “Thornhill Local Centre” located in the Bayview Avenue and John Street area from the perspective of Urban Design, Built Form, Land Uses; Transportation & Mobility; and Community Uses.

Residents can continue to provide input through “Your Voice Markham” at yourvoicemarkham.ca/bayview-and-john-visioning-exercise

Winter Maintenance Snow Clearing

With winter soon upon us I want to remind everyone of the city's snow clearing protocols.

Arterial roads (like Yonge Street, Bayview Avenue and Leslie Street) that carry large volumes of traffic are salted and/or plowed until pavement is bare 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout the winter season.

Primary roads (like John Street, Green Lane, Royal Orchard Blvd., Henderson Avenue, Romfield Circuit, Willowbrook Road, Laureleaf Road, Huntington Park Drive, Summerdale Drive, Simonston Blvd. etc.) distribute traffic to both city and York Region arterial roads and are maintained in the same way.

Secondary roads distribute traffic onto primary roads. They include roads with extreme hills, curves and access points and are salted and/or plowed as required until the centre width of the pavement is bare 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., 7 days per week throughout the winter season.

Local roads (like the one I live on) generally carry very low volumes of traffic and are plowed when snow accumulations reach or exceed 7.5 centimetres. If the snowfall is continuing, plowing will begin once snowfall ceases or accumulations exceed 12 centimetres. Normal plowing operations may take approximately 16 hours. Snow plowing will continue until all local roads are completed.

During snowstorms, Markham's Winter Maintenance App – available on the city's website – shows the progress of road and sidewalk plows across the city as we work hard and fast to keep Markham moving.

Windrow Removal

The City of Markham offers a Windrow Removal Service (one car width only) for qualified residents who are over 60 years of age or have a disability. A windrow is the pile of snow left at the bottom of a driveway after the snowplow has cleared the road.

To qualify for the program, **you must first apply for it** by completing an application form available on Markham's website under “Winter Road Services.” For those who qualify for the program the windrow will be cleared up to four hours after your street is plowed.

Metrolinx Issues Notices of Application to Expropriate Land

At time of writing Metrolinx has continued* to issue Notices of Application for Approval to Expropriate Land along the Yonge North Subway Extension corridor.

While these are not the first of these notices, the latest particularly for the retail plazas at 7345/7359 Yonge Street and 7335 Yonge Street have a broader community impact. Both are near the future Clark subway station at Clark Avenue and Yonge Street.

To quote Metrolinx they have “...identified certain property interests required for project construction. While we have been working with affected property owners to negotiate amicable agreements, it is necessary to initiate the expropriation process in parallel in order to meet project timelines and safeguard delivery.”

They go on to write that: “We want to emphasize that the launch of the expropriation process does not preclude continued negotiation — our aim is always to reach a fair and mutually agreeable resolution with property owners. If an agreement is reached, the expropriation will be discontinued.”

For more information, please write YorkRegion@metrolinx.com

**A number of property owners have received similar notices over the past few years*

My Trip to Nördlingen, Germany

I was delighted to represent Mayor Scarpitti and our city in Wall Festival celebrations in Nördlingen in September. Markham and Nördlingen have developed an active cultural exchange since a twinning agreement was signed

between the two cities in October 2001.

This German city was first mentioned in recorded history in 898 and remains surrounded by a remarkable 2.7 kilometre wall that will be 700 years old in 2027.

Our special relationship has historical origins. William Berczy – born in nearby Wallerstein – and a group of 200 settlers from Northern Germany are considered the founders of Markham in 1794.

Those who know me well know I am an avid student of 20th Century history, but I could not resist being in awe of everything Nördlingen had to offer. I am grateful for the opportunity to visit and learn more about the origins of Markham.



Distance to Markham



William Berczy plaque in Wallerstein



Markham Street Sign

Improving Pedestrian Safety

I am pleased to share news that my request to have permanent safety bollards installed at the intersection of Laureleaf Road and Steeles Avenue is now complete with a total of eight (tasteful looking) bollards in place.

As you may be aware Steeles Avenue – including both sides and all intersections with Markham roads – are the responsibility of the City of Toronto. I am grateful for the efforts of Markham's Traffic Engineers, working closely with their Toronto counterparts, to have these now in place.

Their placement on both northeast and northwest corners will inhibit vehicles (including trucks) from sharply cutting the corner as well as those illegally proceeding west from the dedicated right-turn lane and endangering unsuspecting pedestrians.



The bollards finally in place

Investments in Clean Electricity Projects

I was pleased to represent Mayor Scarpitti and the City of Markham at an event where the Honourable Tim Hodgson, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, announced \$13M in federal funding to modernize Ontario's electricity grid, ensuring more reliable power for Ontarians.

As I said at the announcement: “This investment shows what's possible when government, industry, and communities work together toward shared goals of sustainability, innovation, and resilience. For our community this is more than technological upgrades — it means a smarter, cleaner, more reliable energy future, while ensuring our residents, businesses, and institutions benefit directly from innovation in the energy sector.”



Speaking at the announcement

Metrolinx Community Engagement and Office Tour

Over the summer I met with Raj Khetarpal, Vice President, Community Engagement with Metrolinx at their Union Station offices.

While Raj and I have been working closely together for the past four years, it was a wonderful opportunity to speak candidly about the Yonge North Subway Extension project, the concerns of the Thornhill community and Metrolinx's ways-of-working.

In some ways we are fortunate that the YNSE will be the last constructed of Metrolinx's current subway expansion projects that also include: the Scarborough Subway Extension, the Eglinton Crosstown West Extension, and the Ontario Line. Raj told me the learnings from each of those projects are mostly being applied to ours.

On a personal note, Metrolinx occupies the same Union Station offices that CP Rail did when I worked there in the early part of my career. Raj gave me a guided tour of the offices which are not open to the public. It has been 30 years since I last walked those halls, and I was surprised how quickly my fond (and youthful) memories came rushing back!

Honda Indy Coming to Markham in 2026

I was pleased to join Mayor Scarpitti and my Council colleagues for the September announcement that the Ontario Honda Dealers Indy, hosted by the City of Toronto since 1986, will move next year to Markham August 14-16 for the first of five years.

The temporary track will be built in the eastern portion of Markham Centre, between Kennedy Road, Enterprise Boulevard, Unionville GO tracks and Highway 407. The circuit features a 12-turn, 3.52 kilometre layout and the three-day weekend event is expected to draw more than 150,000 attendees and generate \$50 million in economic activity through sport tourism, hospitality and event services.

I applaud my friend and colleague Ward 5 Councillor Andrew Keyes for first identifying the opportunity and seeing it through months of negotiations to a signed agreement.

16 John Street Fire

In the early morning hours of August 21, Markham's Fire Department responded to a house fire at 16 John Street in the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District.

The home dates from 1879 and has been used as a law office for decades. Fortunately, no one was injured. The fire damage was extensive, and the building deemed structurally unsafe. The cause is

suspected to be squirrels chewing through the electrical wiring. At time of writing the owner is working with the city's Heritage Planning staff to determine next steps.



Heritage Markham photo



In better days...



On Fire - Photo: Matthew Levy GTA911Media



Present day

Update: YNSE Emergency Exit Buildings

Further to the story in my Spring / Summer 2025 newsletter, Metrolinx has now announced the location of EEB-4. It will be located on the east side of Yonge Street, within the municipal right-of-way, immediately south of John Street and behind 40, 42 and 44 Confederation Way.

In addition, at time of writing, Metrolinx is in negotiations to acquire 132 Kirk Drive which will bring the number of homes there to three (#s 128, 130 and 132) required to construct EEB-6.

EEBs allow for the safe evacuation of subway passengers in the event of an emergency. They consist of a surface building that connects with stairs to the underground tunnel and must be 762-metres apart along the 8-kilometre route with each subway station also serving as an emergency exit.